1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

The influence of the

medicine man is due to his supposed power of prophecy and divination. No explanation is offered of this power, nor does it appear that the Laibons are believed to enjoy the acquaintance and assistance of definite spiritual beings; but they can foretell the future by such methods as throwing stones out of a horn, inspecting the entrails of slaughtered animals, interpreting dreams, and delivering oracles when intoxicated with honey wine. Great, however, as is their influence, it does not appear that either among the Masai or the Nandi, where similar institutions prevail, they have ever attempted to assume a position like that of the various small sultans of the coast or the kings to the west of Lake Victoria.

The most celebrated of these medicine men was Mbatian, the father of the present holder of the office, Lenana, who died about 1890. He is celebrated for having prophesied outbreaks of cattle plague and small-pox, which duly came to pass; and also for having foretold the arrival of white people. It is generally said that he bade the Masai be friendly to them, but Mr. Hollis could not find any corroboration of this statement. His death was followed by a disputed succession. There is considerable discrepancy as to the details of the story, but, according to the versions taken down by Mr. Hollis (p. 327), Mbatian told his eldest son Sendeyo that on the morrow he would invest him with the insignia of a Laibon, of which the principal is an iron club. Lenana, the younger son, overheard, and presented himself before his father very early the next morning. Mbatian, who was very aged and had only one eye, behaved much like Isaac in similar circumstances, and gave his younger son the insignia, saying 'Thou shalt be great among thy brothers and among all the people.' In any case, Lenana succeeded, and was accepted as Laibon by all the Masai except the Loita. This created a division in the tribe, and as it roughly corresponded with the division between British and German territory, Sendeyo was long regarded as the chief of the German Masai and Lenana of the British. But in 1902 Sendeyo quarrelled with the German administration, made his peace with his brother, and came over to the British Protectorate.

The religious ideas of the Masai, as collected by Mr. Hollis, are vague and unformulated. The commonest word for God is Eng-ai, which it will be observed is a substantive with a *feminine* article. Eng-ai appears to be used either quite indefinitely and impersonally of remarkable natural phenomena

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

(especially rain, the sky, and volcanoes), or else definitely and personally of superhuman beings. In this latter sense it is said that there are two Gods (Ing-aĭtin are), the Black God and the Red God, of whom the former is kindly, but the latter malevolent. It is the special function and pleasure of the Black God to provide rain, but the Red God objects to turning on the celestial water-tap. Loud thunder is the result of the Red God trying to get to earth through the Black God's dominions in order to kill men, but the distant rumbling is the Black God saying to him, 'Do let them alone; don't kill them.' This happy fancy that the good god is near but the bad god far, which is probably no accident but due to the fundamental characteristics of the Masai mind, has doubtless saved untold suffering, for it does away at once with the necessity for human sacrifices and all similar methods of propitiating cruel powers. Besides the Black and Red Gods there is a quasi-divine personage called Naiteru-Kop, who appears to have been, if not the creator, at least the arranger of the present order of things. A man called Le-eyo appears to have been the principal patriarch, though there were also Dorobo (hunting tribes) in his time, so that he was not strictly the first man. Death entered the world owing to his selfishness and disobedience (p. 269), and, by an incident common in stories of this kind, his younger son became the father of the Masai, while his elder son lost his birthright, and was the ancestor of the inferior tribes.

The worship of the Masai, like their beliefs, seems to be somewhat vague and wanting in ceremonial, but Mr. Hollis's collection shows that they have definite prayers, and that they petition the deity more frequently and fervently than the surrounding tribes are known to do. This is confirmed by Thomson, who speaks of them howling out prayers to Eng-aĭ for hours together. By a custom not without parallel in other nations, it would appear that the women pray twice a day, but the men only occasionally and in grave circumstances. The prayers which are for children, rain, and victory, are addressed to Eng-aĭ as a distinct personality 'who is prayed to and hears.' Remarkable also is the phrase 'the highlands and lowlands of our vast country which belongs to our God.' On the other hand, the sun and moon, the morning and evening star, and the mountain clouds are also invoked, and one song says in two consecutive verses, 'He whom I pray to is God,' and 'He whom I pray to is Lenana, our medicine man.' It is difficult to say whether

[P. 264]

'L-OMON LI-OPA LOO-'L-MAASAE
MASAI MYTHS AND TRADITIONS

*539

En-neikuna 'ng-aĭtin.

[176] Etii 'ng-aĭtin are: etii eng-aĭ narok, netii en-nanyokye. Ore eng-aĭ narok na supat; ore en-nanyokye na malmali.

Nējōki eng-aĭ narok en-nanyokye: 'Máishoó ol-orere eng-are amu etaa en-nemuta to-'l-amōyu.'

Nējo en-nanyokye: 'Aĭya, taboloi naa eng-are meshōmo.' Nebol, nesha eng-aĭ kitok.

Nējōki eng-aĭ nanyokye en-narok: 'Ingenoi pae amu etabaĭkia.'

Nējo en-narok: 'Eitu ebaĭki.'

Negira pokirare, nesha eng-aĭ oo mekenyu. Neitōki eng-aĭ nanyokye nējōki en-narok: 'Ingenoi eng-are amu etabaĭkia.' Neiken eng-aĭ narok.

Netoni 'n-guti-oloñgi, nējo eng-aĭ narok: 'Máinyiakí aaponiki ol-orere eng-are, amu etōīto 'n-gujit.'

Neilepilep eng-aĭ nanyokye, nējo: 'Mme, mekure eboloori eng-are.'

Neilepilepakīno pokirare, nējo eng-aĭ nanyokye: 'Aar kullo-tuñganak lindapashipash.'

The story of the gods.

There are two gods, a black one and a red one. The black god is good, and the red god malicious.

One day the black god said to the red one: 'Let us give the people some water for they are dying of hunger.'

The red god agreed, and told the other one to turn on the water. This he did, and it rained heavily.

After a time the red god told the black one to stop the water as sufficient rain had fallen.

The black god was, however, of opinion that the people had not had enough, so he refused.

Both remained silent after this, and the rain continued till the next morning, when the red god again said that enough had fallen. The black god then turned off the water.

A few days later the black god proposed that they should give the people some more water as the grass was very dry.

The red god, however, was recalcitrant and refused to allow the water to be turned on again.

They disputed for some time, and at length the red god threatened to kill the people, whom he said the black god was spoiling.

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
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Nējo en-narok: 'Mēari 'l-tuñganak lainei.' Nemit eng-ai narok ēari 'l-tuñganak amu ninye nabaiye te-'nna-matwa, na en-nanyokye nabaiye te-keper.

Itadua, 'n-oshi-kikurukurot nikinitig ējo: 'Pel-pel-pel,' eng-ai nanyokye naiyōu negiru eng-ae alōtu aar il-tuñganak. Ore 'n-gikurukurot naajo: 'Ruru-ruru-ruru,' eng-ai narok najōki eng-ae: 'Tapala, miar.'

At this the black god said: 'I shall not allow my people to be killed,' and he has been able to protect them, for he lives near at hand, whilst the red god is above him. 539*

When one hears the thunder crashing in the heavens it is the red god who is trying to come to the earth to kill human beings; and when one hears the distant rumbling, it is the black god who is saying: 'Leave them alone, do not kill them.'

En-e-'n-aunir [1]

Etii en-dōki naji en-e-'n-aunir, kake ol-figatuny opa, newala, neaku ol-tuñgani eng-ae-matwa, neaku o-soit eng-ae-matwa.

Newala kulye-oloñgi, neaku eng-ae-matwa ol-figatuny, neaku eng-ae ol-tuñgani.

Neton ake to-'sero, nenyoru naleñg e-silalei amu e-misimis.

Nemenya 'l-chañgit, nenya 'l-tuñganak ake.

Ten eim il-tuñganak e-wōji netii, neipot en-e-'n-aunir, nējo: 'Wōu, ñgania, tudumakaki 'l-kāk, en-gerai e-yēyo.'

Ore ten elo ol-tuñgani, neñgor te-'n-aunir, nējo: 'Ara en-oo-'l-Aiser, i'lanyaki.'

A devil.

There is a thing which is called a devil. It was formerly a lion, but it changed itself, and one half became a man while the other half became a stone. [096]

This devil can alter its appearance, and is sometimes to be seen one half a lion and the other half a man.

It lives in a forest and is particularly fond of the tree called e-silalei [2] owing to the denseness of its growth.

It only eats human flesh and will not touch wild animals.

When people pass the spot where the devil is, it calls to them, and says: 'Come, my brother, help me lift this load of firewood.'

If anybody complies with its request, he is struck with the devil's stake, and the devil cries out to him: 'I belong to the Aiser clan, escape from me if you can.'

[1] Lit. the-of-the-stake. Krapf (*Vocabulary of the Enguduk Eloikop*, p. 9) also mentions this belief in a devil, and says that the word refers to a pointed stick.

[2] Commiphora, near *C. Schimperi*, Engl.

1: Hollis G-5 (ca. 1894-1904) 1905
FL12 Masai FL12

Naiteru-kop[1].

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[116] Itadua, etii en-dōki naji Naiteru-kop, na eng-aī, kake mme ol-kitok anaa eng-aī narok.

Naa 'l-paiyani kituak kiniñgyé ējōkīni 'yook aajo:

Itadua, opa il-Maa naa ninje 'l-Torōbo, meata opa 'n-gīshu. Ore 'l-Torōbo naa ninje ooata 'n-gīshu.

Neipot Naiteru-kop ol-Torōbōni, nējōki: 'Tayōku[2] tadēkenya te-niosōwani p' aaliki tōki.'

Neiruk ol-Torōbōni: 'Aiya,' nelo airura.

Neniñg ol-Mái ōji eng-arna enye Le-eyo pe ējōki Naiteru-kop ol-Torōbōni: 'Tayōku'; neisho, neinyōtōto kewárie, nelo aitashe te-'n-netaaniki Naiteru-kop.

Ore pe ekenyu, nelo en-netii, nējōki Naiteru-kop ol-Mái: 'Ira 'ñgae?'

Nējo Le-eyo: 'Nanu Le-eyo.' Nējo Naiteru-kop: 'Kodee ol-Torōbōni?' Nējo Le-eyo: 'Maiyōlo.'

Nebol Naiteru-kop en-jumata en-gāne, nerukunye 'n-gīshu cometājo ol-Mái: 'Tapala.'

The beginner of the earth.

The thing which is called Naiteru-kop is a god, but not as great as the black god[2].

This is the story which was told us by the elders:

The Masai were formerly Dorobo, and had no cattle: it was the Dorobo who possessed the cattle.

Naiteru-kop came one day and said to a Dorobo: 'Come early to-morrow morning, I have something to tell you.'

The Dorobo replied: 'Very well,' and went to sleep.

A Masai named Le-eyo, having heard what had been said to the Dorobo, arose during the night, and waited near the spot where Naiteru-kop was.

When it dawned he went to Naiteru-kop, who said to him: 'Who are you?'

On Le-eyo telling him his name, Naiteru-kop asked where the Dorobo was. Le-eyo replied that he did not know.

Naiteru-kop then dropped one end of a piece of hide from the heavens, and let cattle down one by one until the Masai told him to stop.

[1] Related by Napisyeki, an elder of the Aiser clan (Sighirari sub-district).

[113] [2] Krapf in his *Travels and Missionary Labours in East Africa* writes (p. 360), 'These truculent savages (the Masai and Wakwavi) have a tradition that Engai—heaven or rain—placed a man named Neiterkop on Mount Kenya. He was a kind of demi-god, for he was exalted above men and yet not equal to Engai.'

[2] For tayooku.

6: Thomson K-3 (1883-1884)1887
FL12 Masai FL12

776 In connection with the decided belief of the Masai in a God, it may be noted that they have also some minor deity called Neiterkob—apparently, as far as I could learn, an [754] earth spirit. They have faith in witchcraft, though the efficacy of the lybon, or medicine-man, lies not in any innate ability of his own, but in his power of intercession with Ngăi, who works through him, and imparts magical virtues to various objects. Their conception of the Deity seems to be marvellously vague. I was Ngăi. My lamp was Ngăi. Ngăi was in the steaming holes. His house was in the eternal snows of Kilimanjaro. In fact, whatever struck them as strange or incomprehensible, that they at once assumed had [782] some connection with Ngăi. Their prayers to him were incessant. Nothing could be done without hours of howling, whether it was to seek direction where to slaughter their 824 enemies, or to ward off a disease. The most sacred thing among 778 them is the grass. Held in the hand, or tied in a sprig to the dress, it is a sign of welcome and peace. Thrown at any one, or into some mysterious place, it is an invocation for a blessing on the person, or a propitiatory offering. Next to the 272 grass comes the milk. No liberties may be taken with it. 778 The milk must be drawn into calabashes specially reserved for its reception, into which water is not allowed to enter—*cleanliness* being ensured by woodashes. To boil it is a heinous offence, and would be accounted a sufficient reason for massacring a caravan. It is believed that the cattle would [231] cease to give milk. The cows, it may be remarked, are never milked except in the dark.

885 Moran found married life sadly dull after his warrior experiences, and to kill time he accompanied one or two war-parties. But that was exceptional. His time henceforward was chiefly occupied in eternal and interminable discussions on the most trivial questions, or wandering long distances on visits to his friends, while his wife stayed at home to milk the cattle, or occasionally made journeys to neighbouring hostile tribes to buy grain. She, however, was in her element when a caravan came round, and then she enjoyed the double pleasure of an intrigue and a lovely present of iron wire and beads.

595 In time Moran's first wife became old and ugly, and he took to himself a second—the former being stripped of all her iron wire for the purpose of decking the new comer. At last the 764 day closed for both of them, and one after the other, they formed the subject of horrible hyenas' laughter. These fierce

11: Leakey E-5 (no date) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
Kenya

427 428 Women possess no property save their ornaments. Of these the beads and the necklaces become the property of the daughters, but the wire ornaments are thrown away.

975 976 *Spirit Life.*—My informants declared that the Masai had no belief in a spirit life after death, or in spirits of any kind, but I am not satisfied on this point. For some reason (probably a restriction with a heavy penalty attached) they were unwilling to discuss this subject.

754 *Curses.*—The death-bed curse is considered very terrible, as there is no possible way of escaping its evil effects, for a curse can only be removed by the person who uttered it. A man who has been cursed will use every possible means to have the curse withdrawn immediately lest the utterer of the curse should die. (A curse [975] uttered during life is supposed often to remain inactive until the death of the utterer, and this in itself seems to indicate a belief in some sort of spirit activity.)

PART VIII.—CLANS.

614 The following is a list of the clans and sub-clans among the Masai (it is as nearly complete as possible):—

Main Clan Name.	*Sub-clans.*
No. 1. Laiseer	(1) Laiseer (2) Legetoi (3) Letoya (4) Lukumai (5) Lamothere (6) Libartimaru (7) Loiger.
No. 2. Ndarosiru	(1) Ndarosiru (2) Lanaboguaru.
No. 3. Molelian	(1) Molelian (2) Mbarakineti
No. 4. Magesen	(1) Magesen (2) Lesegu.

PART IX.—CATTLE AND SHEEP.

233 As a pastoral people the Masai have many very interesting customs connected with their flocks, but information on this subject is very hard to obtain, as details of the greatest interest to anthropologists are often not given because they are considered too trifling or too well-known to be worth discussion. A few interesting notes were, however, obtained.

12: Fox G-5 (1925-1930) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
Kenya

Functions of Laibons.—A *Laibon* is far more than a mere medicine man or purveyor of charms. His function would seem to approach more closely that of a chief priest of the Israelites, and the N-Kidongi sub-clan might be compared to the Levite tribe. 791

He is, or should be, the religious head of the tribe. No ceremony nor important enterprise should be undertaken without his blessing, in return for which he should be given a large present of cattle. He prays to God on behalf of the people. On one occasion Sendeyo arrived in my camp before sunrise, just as I was about to start on an excursion into the deep forest, and made a prayer for our safety. We stood round him and responded "*Na-Ai*" (= "O God") at the pauses; I was too much taken by surprise to remember the details of the prayer except that it was very impressive, and that he ended by giving his genealogy (*see* Hollis, p. 326) in order to show that the prayer was one which should receive attention.

The *Laibons* use charms (*indalingoi*) for various purposes, and their employment is invariably accompanied by prayer to God. I have a few of the charms in my possession and have been instructed in their use, under promise not to reveal my knowledge. Sendeyo once said to me that a good heart was better than charms. [789]

Witchcraft.—Although the *Laibons* use charms, witchcraft, *i.e.* harmful magic, is not indispensable to their office. Some of them, however, are alleged to have made use of it. Witchcraft is not indigenous to the Masai. Such persons as I have found practising black magic in Masai country have learnt it from the Kikuyu of Nyeri District or from the Meru. 754 [779]

Religion.—The Masai believe in one God whom they call En-Gai, which is the same word as they use for rain. They say that God is one, but permeates everything. He may be prayed to as inhabiting a wood, a stream, the earth, etc., but He is all the same God. The Masai only use short prayers such as "Na-Ai" (O God) and "Na-Ai mikiar" (O God do not strike me) except for the prayers at *Il Pul* and those of *Laibons* already mentioned. Some, if not all, of the ceremonies have a religious significance, but I cannot give details without further experience. 771 776

Superstitions.—There are certain old trees with holes in them, in which a Masai puts a handful of grass or leaves when he passes. They have told me that this is equivalent to a prayer, "May I live to be old like this tree." 789

A traveller sometimes puts a stone in the fork of the branch of a tree near the track in order that he may arrive at his destination before nightfall.

There are a few places where the passer-by should tie a knot in the grass. I am uncertain of the reason for this.

When the new moon is first seen people pluck grass and throw it towards the moon, saying, "*Injoki o sesen ol oado naaisho ol dorop*"="Give me the body which is long and I give you the short." I do not know the significance of this.

13:Huntingford E-4 (no date) 1953 FL12 Masai FL12

Warriors do their hair in pigtails, *ol-taika;* other people of both sexes shave their heads periodically. In both sexes the ear-lobes are pierced and elongated, and the two lower middle incisor teeth are removed. Cicatrized patterns are often made on the upper part of the body in both sexes.

Iron-work

Iron is used for weapons (spear and sword of warriors, and arrows of elders), axes, knife-blades, razors, and many of the ornaments of both sexes. The spears and swords are distinctive of Masai culture and, together with the shield and *e-rep* arm-clamp, separate the Masai and Nandi culturally from other Nilo-Hamites. Spears are of three shapes: a small leaf-shaped blade with long neck, long shaft, and medium butt; the great " shovel-blade " with short neck, long shaft, and medium butt; and the long-bladed winged spear with short shaft and long butt. The colour of the short shaft of the winged war-spear is important: senior warriors have black shafts, others reddish ones, and the demand of junior warriors for the privilege of black shafts is a significant factor in the tension that arises between senior and junior warriors. The sword has a long narrow blade and is kept in a red leather sheath attached to the belt. The winged spear-blade and sword have been borrowed by the Nandi, Kipsikis, Keyo, Kony and others of the Nandi division, together with the arm-clamp; the Kikuyu have imitated them.

Other Objects

Clubs are made of wood or rhinoceros horn. Shields are roughly oval, about 3 ft. long, and made of buffalo or giraffe hide on a light wooden framework; according to Merker, the old form of shield was circular and (if the scale of his Fig. 34*b* is correct) about 1 ft. in diameter. Stools are cut out of a solid block of wood and have three legs. Horns are used for summoning people, but there are no musical instruments or drums.

Ritual and Beliefs

Religion

Little has been recorded of Masai religious beliefs, except such obvious facts as the invocation of *Enk-ai* (the Masai word for God, rain, and sky). As to ancestor-worship, it is generally said that the Masai do not believe in an after-life (said also of the Suk); but the alleged belief that the soul of a laibon or rich man turns into a snake implies some belief in the survival of the soul. This matter needs careful investigation; and Merker's statement that each Masai is taken to paradise by his guardian angel and let in by *Enk-ai* if he has been good is alien to Nilo-Hamitic thought. *Enk-ai* is recognized as a creator, and is prayed to by both men and women. Some of the prayers recorded include an invocation to both *Enk-ai* and Mbatiany, the laibon who died *c.* 1890; thus Thomson heard the Il-Aikipiak praying to *Enk-ai* and Mbatiany, and the Nandi war dance after a victory, recorded by Hollis after Mbatiany's death, contained also an invocation to *Enk-ai* and Mbatiany. The " minor deity called Neiterkob " which Thomson thought was an earth-spirit, appears in Krapf's book as the Neiterukob, " the mediator between God and men." But the Masai word *naiterukop* means no more than " that which began the earth," and thus would seem really to apply to *Enk-ai* in his role as creator. *Enk-ai*, god, is grammatically feminine, and his wife *Ol-apa*, the moon, is grammatically masculine.

Death and Burial

The bodies of most people are put out for the hyenas, to the west of the kraal, and laid on the left side so that the face looks eastward, with the legs drawn up, the head supported by the left hand, and the right hand across the breast. The

/xiii cont./

114 177 773 797 [115] in the Church Missionary Society's station in Taveta" /cited in English/, this, as Merker himself told me, can only refer to a Masai man from whom he received other information; since for the many investigations on /xiv/ which his ethnological work is based (habits, customs, names, etc. etc.), he had quite different informants, of course. And Hollis' objection (1)

114 773

> 1. Personal communication from the researcher, highly esteemed by me, whom I had the good fortune to become acquainted with in September, 1908, in Oxford (at the Kongress für Religionsgeschichte /Congress on the History of Religion/), just as I was also able to become personally acquainted with the deceased Merker in 1907, after I had previously corresponded with him, which was extremely valuable to me in view of the so highly controversial Masai problem.

that he (Hollis), who was also acquainted with the Masai of his region for many years, would then also have had to come across the traces of such early history is only an argumentum e silentio. Either the more southerly Masai (in German East Africa), with whom Merker worked, were more faithful guardians of those ancient treasures, which is not impossible, or Merker also had more luck in gaining their confidence on this point than Hollis, who, just there, did not come across the right people. Merker, however, indeed also expressly states in the foreword to the first edition that it was not until the fifth year after the beginning of his work that he came across those traditions from ancient times, which by no means commonly cross people's lips, but are handed down only in particular families and there are only ever to be found among a few old men. And then it took another year and a half before Merker had completely learned what is set down in his fourth chapter. Moreover, even according to Hollis (cf. also C. Eliot's introduction to A. C. Hollis, The Masai, their language and folklore, p. xix), the monotheism of the Masai

114 • 776 782 113

/xiv cont./

114 and their imageless worship of God ("they have definite prayers
• 776 and they petition the deity more frequently and fervently than
782 the surrounding tribes are known to do" /cited in English/), stand
113 unquestionably, just as generally a comparison of the book by Hollis, appearing shortly after Merker's book, with Merker's Masai is the best apologia for the reliability of Merker's ethnological as well as linguistic observations.

114 Another outstanding African scholar, the praiseworthy, well-
174 known linguist Carl Meinhof of Berlin (now Hamburg), has above all, and, to be sure, for linguistic reasons, turned against Merker's designation of the Masai as a "Semite people," and with that then also at the same time against their onetime ancestral home in Arabia (2).

[113] 2. Cf. his review in Zeitschr. f. Ethnol., 36, 1904, pp. 735-744.

But what the Arabist Schwally (in Giessen) said about the Masai traditions (Archiv für Rel.-Gesch., IX, 1906, p. 505), that here "features of Semitic origin are well grafted on African ones" (but "when and under what circumstances is hard to say"), also applies to the language, as I was able to convince myself by a thorough study of Hollis' book. Definite remains show that the Masai must once have been Semites, and, to be sure, Arabian Semites. This will be briefly discussed in what follows next.

174 Not only does their own tradition teach that they came from
197 the north, but this is also confirmed by a comparison of some of
[173] their number words with those /xv/ of the Cushitic languages
[113] (especially Somali and Galla) and of Nuba. One should compare
[804] the following lists, to which I have also further added the number words of Nandi, closely related to the Masai, from the new book by Hollis (The Nandi, their language and folklore, with Introduction by C. Eliot, Oxford, 1909):

/21 cont./

791 576 609 rises, goes toward him, and, with the customary greeting, extends his hand to him, whereby, not this, but the wrist is grasped. After the concluded discussion, for which there are no particular formalities, he takes his leave with the ordinary farewell.

791 789 [262] [173] In the way of food, the ol oiboni takes only goat liver roasted on the fire, milk, and honey, for, through any other food, "he would suffer the loss of the capacity for prophecy and the preparation of efficacious magic charms." Of these arts little is supposed to have been handed down to his son and still less to Zendeo, through which it is all the more comprehensible that the /22/ Masai today tell of hundreds of kinds of miracles that Mbatyan allegedly performed. According to them, he could fell large trees by sheer will power, or he had the hut in which he was to be found set afire by his attendant, and, after it had burned down, he appeared, uninjured, out of the ashes.

756 [613] From the En gidon lineage there are further supplied, as has already been mentioned, the sorcerers or medicine men (ol goiatiki, el goiatek), several of whom live in each district. Their office, too, is handed down from father to son, who, however, is usually initiated into the whole secret art only after his marriage. The [789] most important magic charm in the life of the Masai, the war medicine, the ol goiatiki does not know how to make. Rather, one turns to him only in cases of illness of human beings and livestock for which the well-known remedies fail, or which one traces back to the sorcery of evil neighbors, as well as to determine unknown wrongdoers (thieves, murderers, etc.).

613 [776] The lineage of the El kiboron of the El mulelian tribe, who, according to the view of all the people, are especially favored by 'Ng ai, the god of the Masai, which has made them primarily the bearers of the religious traditions, require a special discussion.

613 157 Corresponding to their position with 'Ng ai, they are distinguished by a relative peaceableness. The young warriors, to be sure, also set out on raiding expeditions with the other lineages, but they thereby seem to avoid any unnecessary roughness or brutality, in which the others often compete. The passion for disputes, quarrels, and vituperation, a prominent trait in the character of the young

/203 cont./

XXI.

000 Religion. -- Monotheism. -- Religious doctrine. -- Explanation of natural phenomena. -- Prayers. -- Supplication feasts. -- Sacrifices. -- The snakes. -- Evil spirits. -- Sorcery. -- Amulets. -- Evil eye.

177 771 In a comparison of the ethnography of the Masai with that of the peoples neighboring them, living around them, no chasm as deep as in the field of religious outlook appears anywhere. Whereas in almost all the areas of ethnography we otherwise find a more or less strong influencing of the latter by the former -- from more external things, /204/ such as ornaments and weapons, to more deeply incisive social changes, such as, for example, the shaping of warriordom after the Masai model -- the religion of the two shows a sharp separation, which nowhere permits any interplay of the one in the other. In sharp contrast to the anthropolatry, the worship of departed human spirits, and the polydemonism of the Negroes, occurring in all forms and gradations, stands the simple, straightforward monotheism of the Masai.

• 776 779 Their god is called 'Ng ai and is an incorporeal being, a spirit. The people do not think about his appearance. The making of pictorial or sculptural representations of God would be a sin, according to his commandment given to the Masai. God is the creator of the world, the earth, and all that it harbors. He governs everything through his will. He is the guardian of the natural and moral order of the world. The laws and commandments that are valid in the life of the people and of the individual are expressions of his will. God is almighty, omnipresent, omniscient, benign, infinite, eternal.

[771] 'Ng ai najollo = God knows it, 'Ng ai naischa el duhganak, 'n dogirin sidan = God gives human beings the good things, ol bai 'l Eng ai = it is the will of God, are words that one can hear every day, and they are not often used thoughtlessly, for a deep religiosity is peculiar to the Masai generally. God's benevolence forgives human beings a great deal and for a long time. Yet human beings are too weak and sinful, so that God has to punish from time to time for

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776 779 improvement. He then does this through sickness, drought, or cattle epidemics.

779 721 [186] The Masai feel that they are the chosen people of 'Ng ai; all other peoples should be subject to them. God created the world with all that is in it only for them, and thus everything on earth belongs to them. If they obtain booty in war against another tribe, they are only taking what has been given to them by God for their own, what lawfully belongs to them, and what that tribe is unlawfully withholding from them. "If the el mgg would voluntarily give us our property, for that is what the livestock in their possession is, we should not have to make war on them. But since they do not do this, we are forced into war." And they are constantly waging this war against the despised, savage heathen, who know nothing about 'Ng ai and do not pray to him, but to spirits, which is why he does not assist them and always makes the Masai victors for a worthy cause.

776 779 In their journey through life God protects the Masai through guardian angels, who are pictured as winged, invisible beings of human form. The guardian angels are the same sex as their protégés; a male individual has an ol duŋgani l Eŋg ai, a female one an eŋ gorojoni Eŋg ai, watching over them. The angel accompanies the person always and everywhere and protects him from dangers, so that he will not succumb in the struggle for existence before the lifetime previously set for him by God has run out; only then does the person [775] die. The angel carries his soul /205/ to the other world and then undertakes the protection of a child born on the same day. Every day a Masai dies and every day one is born, the people say.

775 779 Into the other world (eŋ gatambó = cloud land, i.e., the land where the clouds come from) go the souls of all the deceased, both those of the Masai and of non-Masai, both those of the good and those of the bad people. As soon as a soul reaches the portal of the other world, which lies far to the north (Kopekob), God decides its future fate. The souls of good people gain entry into paradise, which is equipped with all the beauties and splendors of nature. Lush pastures with fat cattle alternate with lakes, rivers, and cool glades whose trees bear the most delicious fruits. In the midst of this splendor the good souls live in human fashion, but without care, trouble, or

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975 work. Every day they receive the best food in abundance. Here,
979 however, in accordance with God's command, each one may marry only one wife. The other world, like the earth, is divided into individual lands, each of which is intended for the souls of one people, so that the person who arrives there will find his deceased relatives. Bad human beings are denied this paradise; they are driven into a barren, waterless desert. Those not so bad also gain entry into paradise through God's grace, though not to live in carefree happiness, but to do hard work.

979 This is the Masai religious doctrine as it is handed down and taught by the old men. The supernatural explanation of natural phenomena has nothing to do with the religious doctrine. In them
[981] one sees only the works or expressions of God and therefore observes at least the more powerful ones with something like reverential awe. It should be expressly emphasized that it is only a matter of this and not, say, demonolatry, the deification of personified natural forces.

976 The sun (eng oloń) is regarded largely as a reflection of God,
821 like the gloriously colored morning and evening rosiness. The clouds mask God before the eyes of mankind, they surround him, from them he looks down on the bustle of the earth. This seems to explain why the Masai call the redness of the morning and evening sky 'Ng ai nanjugi, the clouds 'Ng ai nabor, and the blue, cloudless sky 'Ng ai narok. These literally mean "the red God," "the white God," and the "black God," but should properly be translated as "the divine red," "the divine white," and "the divine black," for actually the people see in these phenomena no gods and nothing godlike or to be worshipped like him. It should also be mentioned here that God, who in ordinary speech is always called 'Ng ai, is often called 'Ng ai narok or Hai narok, that is, the black God, in the prayer songs to be discussed later. The Masai themselves do not know any explanation for these strange word-formations, and I have not been able to learn anything from them from which an interpretation could be derived.

/206/ More infrequent than the above explanation for the sun is the one that it and the moon are servants of God, whose duty is to illuminate the earth. In this the sun is regarded as feminine, the

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776 821 [777] moon as masculine, corresponding to their word formation, eíŋ olóó and oi aba. That this view is not peculiar to the Masai, but was somewhat uncritically adopted by them is evident from the fact that to a question about the reason for it one is given a very childlike reply, if any at all. "The sun has to work all day, the moon only a few hours at night, consequently the overworked sun is probably a woman, corresponding to the earthly performance of work!" Others again have the sun and moon married; sometimes the former is the man, sometimes the woman in this marriage; it is only certain that both travel, one behind the other, toward the west, where the common hut stands in the clouds. Where the tendency toward personification [[97]] of natural phenomena is peculiar to a people, one must expect that firm views exist at least about the most important and most frequent ones, and therefore the uncertainty in these explanations also shows that it is a matter of something that the Masai adopted, without having any understanding of them.

The first-born child of 'Ng ai, the girl Barsál, brings to human beings the greatest benefit, the rain, and thereby shows that God is satisfied with the doings on earth. His eldest son, Ol gurugur, announces through thunder and lightning that God is angry with human beings because of their bad behavior and at the same time admonishes them to improve. A rainbow is the sign that God is satisfied with the doings of the Masai and is therefore well disposed toward them. Wind and storm are the raging of a wrathful God. Hail announces coming 821 rain. A fireball (bolide) shows that now plentiful rain will fall and 787 that the people will be spared misfortunes, such as livestock epidemics and pox. A comet, on the other hand, means misfortune; sickness and death will befall human beings and livestock. Upon the appearance of a very bright comet in the eighties there soon followed the great livestock epidemic, rinderpest and tuberculosis.

821 776 The Milky Way is the path along which the children of 'Ng ai wander as bright stars. From here they observe the doings of mankind and report on them to God. Other stars are his eyes; now and then one of them shoots forward from there toward the earth, in order to see more accurately -- a shooting star. Venus, which the Masai call en ilegem, announces rain through particularly bright

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light. The nubes minor and major /the two Magellanic Clouds/ are
• [196] two lakes from which the cattle of 'Ng ai drink. The Pleiades
(ñ golowa), through their rising in the west, announce the onset of
the great rainy season named after them. In Orion λ and the two
small stars beside it form a constellation called 'á golia = the
widows. The stars δ, ε, ζ, θ and the two small stars on a line with
it form another constellation. In it δ, ε and ζ are three el morio
who are about to marry three widows. /207/ This constellation is
called 'á gapiak = the remarried widows, in contrast to the three
[196] 'á golia, who stand alone. The two large stars in Centaurus (el
orogo) and the four principal stars in the Southern Cross are boys who
[189] tend the cattle of 'Ng ai, which are represented by the small stars of
the Milky Way. A ring around the sun or moon heralds rain. For
the warriors on an expedition this phenomenon is regarded as prom-
ising rich spoils. Just as sun and moon have made a kraal for them-
selves, so will the warriors on their way have to lay out such a one
for the captured livestock (I).

[823] 1. For the cardinal points (e' lubet Ngi ai =
the sides of God) the Masai have the following
names: North = Kîpeikîk or Kîpeikîk, which
also designates the land of the original home.
South = e' mûnt, i.e., the battle; it is the
direction in which the Masai traveling south
always had to endure new battles against the
long-settled el mugg. East = engilebunoto ebg
gîsê = the sun rises. West = endeipunto ebg
olom = the sun sets.

782 In case of distress, danger, sickness, or other calamities, all the
people pray to God. Otherwise the men say a prayer mostly only on
special occasions, whereas the women pray daily, mornings and
[184] evenings. Children do not pray at all in some districts, in others only
the girls pray, and in still others all children learn it at the age of
[823] six to eight, usually through their mother. In praying, one turns the
face to the north, or in the morning toward the rising sun and in the

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Allegedly they never bite the El Kikuyu people; on the other hand the latter often use them as frightening devices against both Masai and Negroes.

796 The Masai are not familiar with devils, but indeed with the -- male -- demon Ngaamtit, whose body is hard as stone and therefore invulnerable, who bears the head of a predatory animal and whose feet are armed with claws. He lies in wait on paths and calls passers-by by name, in order then to tear apart and devour those who approach. For most adults Ngaamtit is merely a bogeyman for naughty children. "Do not go too far away," the mother says to the children, "otherwise Ngaamtit will get you."

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754 If a person brings misfortune, illness, or death to another through sorcery (ay ekiti), this is merely the effect of a power inherent in the magic medicine, which is based on the composition of the medicine and is effective through the recitation of certain formulae and the execution of special gestures. The aforementioned amulet ring (ol gaweti) protects one against the effect of magic made by another Masai. Women who go into the neighboring areas of foreign tribes to buy vegetables especially protect themselves from their sorcery. They smear their foreheads and cheeks with cattle dung or wear around their necks a cord on which are strung small, split sticks. Other amulets that I found contained, sewed in leather, a mixture of plant powder (from wood, /911/ roots, bark), after which they are named, and a secret medicine of the ol galatiki, who alone is able to prepare the whole in such a way that it is effective. The legumoju amulet is worn by women around their necks and is regarded as prompting conception. We have become acquainted with another remedy prized by the women hereup to then in connection with the boys' ol gubbita leam. The ol gugumi is tied around the ankle and protects one from ailments of the legs. The ol dungel is worn by warriors around the neck or wrist for protection against sorcery. In hand-to-hand combat the powder contained in it is also scattered toward the enemy, whereupon the latter is supposed to be forced to give up his resistance. The os lenti protects the husband from the anger of his wife when he has committed some folly, for example, has gone beyond the customary limits on

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Among the Masai and the ancient Israelites the entire law, the natural and moral order, consists of precepts and interdicts of God. He commands the human beings to do good, he forbids them to do evil. He is the teacher of human beings in the distinction between good and evil, so that this ability to differentiate is one of his foremost characteristics even in the religious view of a primitive people.

The idea of the tree of life presupposes the desire for another characteristic inherent in God, for eternal life not limited by death. Now, however, is such a desire present in the feeling and yearning of a savage, culture-poor man? The extraordinary contempt for human life, the absence of concerning going beyond the customary interment ceremony, the idea that death brings sleep to the aged, rest from earthly life, answer the question negatively. The desire for long life is the result of a higher culture, and, indeed it is the civilized man who wishes for an eternal life on earth, but not the member of a primitive people.

I suspect, therefore, that the Israelitish original conception of paradise knew of only one tree, without any more detailed designation. "the tree concerning which I commanded thee not to eat any of it," as Jahve /Yahweh/ designates it in Genesis 3, 11.

The adoption of the tree of life, which may have come from Babylonian myth, then gave the originally one tree the addition "of the knowledge of good and evil."

In the Biblical presentation and in that of the Masai we find the picture of the tempting of the woman by the snake, which through that is represented as the symbol of evil, of sin. For the Masai this interpretation is still to be found in some of their customs. We saw that the members of the lineage of the El kiboron, peaceful, and therefore particularly beloved of God, do not fear snakes, and, further, they believe that the bones of their interred dead turn into snakes. Proceeding on the assumption that the story of the fall is the primary one, the first-mentioned belief in the naïve form of the primitive peoples shows that those living according to God's commands and illumined by his grace /313/ need not fear the power that evil has over man, whereas the second view demonstrates that what is sinful in man remains on earth and goes on living after his death.